

The Perspective Study of A.G. Gardiner As a Journalist

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During the previous era prose as a literary mode of expression came to blossoming. Political prose, journalistic prose covering a wide spectrum of contemporary society, autobiography, biography letters, travelogues, memoirs and philosophical prose were adroitly attempted by British. The contribution of **Hillaire Ballo, G.K. Chesterton,**

A.G. Gardiner to the development of prose had been phenomenal. English has been wielded with great comment to express the changing social, political and cultural ethos of British. The great masters of British prose spared no pains to decolonize and domesticate English with a view to making it a befitting medium for the expression of typical British ethos.¹

The rapid socio-political and economic changes, industrial, techno-logical and scientific advancement, the urge to re-discover British glorious past and its application in the light of modern ideas, self-introspection and spiritual exploration, the decline of values and morality in modern era, East-West encounter and the search of identity are some of the impulses which have propelled the British English writer to write a varied type of prose.

Besides political prose which has come down from the previous age, social prose, memories, autobiography, biography, travelogues, letters, philosophical prose, aesthetic and critical prose have also flourished during this era. Journalistic prose has assumed great significance. **Although Virginia Woolf once remarked, Journalism embalmed in a book is unreadable. And The newspaper crocus and these flowers fade yet Cobett, Hazlitt, Stevenson, Beerbohm, Lytton Strachey, George Orwell and A.G. Gardiner herself were journalists.²**

Journalism of a high order has inherent literary significance and its universality of appeal cannot be ignored, for example, the mood of penitence soon changed into exploitation of **A.G. Gardiner** memory.

The vested interests which sought to take refuge under his non-violence sought to take refuge under his name. **A.G. Gardiner** life and death seemed as vain as voluntary dispossession of vested interests did not follow the mood of shrift. As non-violent and voluntary liquidation of resistance to human liberation has been delayed we have strayed from the field of **A.G. Gardiner** humanism to the usual clangour of the political world.

The ideologies of the market place have their price and their place. Unless reaction in every form melted, the proposed memorials to **A.G. Gardiner** were to be lies in our soul. No ideology had been more spectacular or so well conceived than **A.G. Gardiner** though he invested it with no intellectual or schismatic clothing. **But his life was a paean of homage to the poor. They were the nations first priority, that should have meant early liquidation of all vested interest. Without sufficient acknowledgement of this aim, reverence has become humbug.³**

Gardiner was essentially a journalist. His hand was ever on the pulse of the people. All his writings were about his people and addressed to them. In the beginning he wrote for Northern Daily Telegraph and Weekly Telegraph. His final and lasting stint was with Daily News of which he later became the Editor. Journalism colored both the matter and manner of his Essays. It was his business to inform, entertain and instruct his readers and he performed this job

admirably through essays and character-sketches. These essays were later collected and published in four volumes, namely Essays Pebbles on The Shore (1917), Leaves in the Wind (1919), Windfalls (1920), and Many Furrows (1924).

The literary and artistic essay must be limited in length and range. When it grows in bulk, it become a dissertation or a treatise. But the essay proper is not expected to be exhaustive. It is a brief composition dealing with an aspect of the problem taken up by the essayist.

Crabbe rightly says, The essay is the most popular mode of writing for it suits the writer who has neither talent nor inclination to pursue his inquiries farther, and the generality of readers who are amused with variety and superficiality.⁴

But a view different from it has been cited by Sainte-Beuve who considers the essay to be the most difficult and delightful form of literature because as it involves saying much in a short space, it needs the art of words. The essay must be concise and thorough; and this implies that the essayist must be a master of his subject.

A.G. Gardiner started his literary career as a journalist. That is why he was able to see that language which could be understood by common people. He shows sincerity humour and thoughtful wisdom. He was a writer of common sense. He always aimed at improving society. He uses simple language to communicate his views. He also gives good examples in favour of his thoughts. He has all the qualities of great essayist of English literature.

As a conscientious craftsman and stylist, and autobiographer and biographer A.G. Gardiner place is very high R.K. Nigam dispassionately assesses his place in literature in the following words:

When all caveats have been made, however, A.G. Gardiner remains the Grand Solitary quality and a writer and a thinker and universal Momus who stands apart from the muddy main- stream.⁵

His great merit as an intellectual is that he is not ever too lazy to avoid doing his own thinking or too timid to hesitate to give outspoken expression to his own views.

Though controversy and obstinate prejudices, myopic assessments and perverseness, anglomania and brute logic characterize the entire gamut of A.G. Gardiner prose, yet the vigor of his logic, the eloquence of his utterances, the flexibility and lucidity of his expression, his unsurpassed intellectual brilliance and wide scholarship, his boundless capacity for original thinking and immaculate command over English assign him a privileged place in literature.

A.G. Gardiner prose style is the revelation of his sensitive and poetical personality. It reveals itself in diverse style in his writings. A.G. Gardiner early letters to his friend are remarkable for simple, clear and craftsmanship and show his mastery of the story telling method. How beautifully he uses words of common speech:

It is not, therefore, with any feeling of unfriendliness to conductors as a class that I pay a tribute to a particular member of that class. I first became conscious of his existence one day when I jumped on to a bus, and found that I had left home without any money in my pocket.⁶

Everyone has had the experience, and knows the feeling, the mixed feeling, which the discovery arouses. You are annoyed because you look like a fool at the best, and like a knave at the worst. You would not be at all surprised if the conductor eyed you coldly as much as to say, Yes, I know that state old trick.

Now then, off you go. And even if the conductor is a good fellow and lets you down easily, you are faced with the necessity of going back, and the inconvenience, perhaps, of missing your train or your engagement.

A.G. Gardiner prose style is versatile and is admirably suited to the variety of subject matter, but it is always simple, straightforward, direct and lucid. He is adept in expressing deep thoughts in fewest possible but highly expressive words. When he writes about the miserable lot of the British masses, his heart overflows with the milk of human kindness and words effortlessly flow.

Having searched my pockets in vain for stray coppers, and having found I was utterly penniless, I told the conductor with as honest a face as I could assume that I couldn't pay the fare, and must go back for money. Oh, you needn't a copper on me.⁷

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